

**WASHINGTON** – A proposal to fully integrate Israel into the U.S. National Ballistic Missile Defense System engineered by U.S. Rep. Mark Kirk (R-Ill.) today passed the U.S. House of Representatives by a bipartisan vote of 394-30.

The proposal, offered in a procedural amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act, requires the Secretary of Defense to better integrate the ballistic missile defense system of the United States with the defenses of Israel and to provide “robust protection” against ballistic missile attacks from Iran.

“Democracies are strongest when they stick together,” Congressman Kirk said. “Iranian President Ahmadinejad calls for Israel to be wiped off the map and talks of the Jewish people’s annihilation. Today America sends a message to the Iranian dictator—Israel will have the full weight of America’s national missile defense system to defend herself.”

In addition to Kirk’s missile defense integration plan, an amendment offered by U.S. Rep. Duncan Hunter (R-CA) authorized an additional \$205 million for U.S.-Israel defense projects, including the Arrow missile program, the David’s Sling short-range ballistic missile defense system and the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) fire unit, a follow-on to the current American-Israel Arrow program.

“Today is an historic day for U.S.-Israel defense relations,” Kirk said. “Israel will be the first and only country to fully integrate with the American missile defense architecture. It is a symbol of our shared values and a safer 21st century.”